

Mauritania seeks help against Polisario

CASABLANCA (R) — Mauritania has appealed for French military help to resist guerrilla fighting for independence in Western Sahara if a referendum there goes in favour of Morocco, French officials said Friday. Official French sources said Mauritanian President Mohammad Maouya Ould Sid'ahmed Taya feared his country could be swamped by Polisario fighters if Morocco was the projected vote in the territory on independence or integration with Morocco. "He is worried. He thinks... Mauritania risks seeing an important number of people arrive on its territory who do not accept the majority verdict in the event that is favourable to integration with Morocco," one French official said. "That would pose serious problems for the Mauritanian army, which is not well-equipped." The official said France had twice guaranteed Mauritania's territorial integrity and if necessary "will reaffirm the position of the recent past." In a related development, the Polisario Front said Friday it had handed over to the U.S. embassy in Algiers bodies of five Americans killed when their plane was shot down over the Western Sahara last week.

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'Inter-faith dialogue builds understanding'

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan returned home Thursday after taking part in the final session of the fifth Islamic-Christian dialogue held in the Swiss city of Chambéry.

Addressing the final session, Prince Hassan stressed the importance of such meetings, saying that they contribute to enhancing confidence and building bridges of mutual understanding.

Prince Hassan said: "We have attempted through the Islamic-Christian debates to identify and encourage the outcome of the various kinds of dialogue and I am very pleased to see that the working teams emanating from this meetings represent the youth, decision-makers and intellectuals from various nationalities."

Prince Hassan called for resisting apartheid saying that "in addition to achieving justice and peace, we have to overcome the difficulties that have aggravated due to the racial political order imposed on some people."

Prince Hassan highlighted the importance of the occupied Arab city of Jerusalem for all monotheistic faiths. However, he said, the Israeli claims do not form a sufficient justification for placing the Holy City under Israeli sovereignty because history proves otherwise.

On the Arab-Israeli conflict, Prince Hassan said the PLO was the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and stressed the Palestinians' right to self-determination and to establishing their own state on their national soil.

Prince Hassan called for collective work to achieve international accords on mutual support and cooperation at various levels.



HM King Hussein

Israelis troops kill 4 Palestinians, wound 27

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — In some of the bloodiest clashes of the year-long Palestinian uprising, Israeli troops Friday shot and killed four Palestinians and wounded 27 others.

Israel, meanwhile, denied entry to Abdeen Jabara, a U.S. citizen and the president of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Foreign ministry spokesman Alon Liel said Jabara was barred "because of his long record of anti-Israeli activities." He said those included serving as a defense attorney in U.S. courts for four Palestinians as well as making anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist statements.

Jabara told the AP the ban was "an unconscious act. I am not an enemy of the state. I have been here at least 15 times before."

In Nablus, heavy black smoke from burning tyres filled the air and the wail of ambulance sirens was heard throughout the city, witnesses said.

The death toll raised to 336 the number of Palestinians killed in the year-long uprising.

Doctors put the wounded toll in Nablus at 20 and said four were in critical condition.

An army spokesman confirmed four Palestinians were killed and nine others wounded. Troops clamped a curfew on the city of 120,000 and barred journalists and photographers from the area.

Israel's socialist parliamentarians

Rifai: Jordan seeks to explain Arab-Palestinian position

King welcomes U.S. move, voices high hopes for peace

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Friday voiced high optimism that the American decision to initiate a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) would lead to a comprehensive settlement of

Interviewed by the American television network NBC, the King said he was "extremely happy and encouraged" by the American move, which he described as "very important towards resolving the most volatile problem threatening regional peace in this area and certainly the world."

The U.S. decision, announced

Wednesday by the Reagan administration, was particularly important since it followed a clear Palestinian peace strategy as reflected in resolutions adopted by the Palestine National Council (PNC) and clarifications made by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Geneva, the King said. He pointed out that the Arab position is totally supportive of the PLO stand.

"Following the PNC resolutions,

the Arab-Israeli conflict and said he expected effort to be launched soon towards convening an international conference on the Middle East.

for lasting peace and justice. "This itself is a very good development, that was sought for a long period of time," he said.

The discussions he held with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on his way back from France Thursday, the King said, dealt with the latest developments and bilateral relations.

(Continued on page 2)

the Palestinian positions has been very, very clear, he said, answering all the requests made by the international community and the United States in Geneva," the King said. "The most important element in the latest developments as far as the American public is concerned, the King said, that the Arabs and the Palestinians have opted for peace and should contribute their efforts

to the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein, works towards establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region and for solving the Palestine problem along the lines of United Nations resolutions and the international legitimacy.

Lawzi said Jordan was proud of the ties of friendship with the Soviet Union.

Lawzi also stressed the need for holding an international peace conference to be attended by all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

Lawzi noted that such a conference was the right optimal form for establishing just peace guaranteed by the superpowers.

"We, in Jordan, are also grateful and proud indeed of the truly unique and special relations that have always existed between our two peoples and countries. We look to the continuation of these ties and this privileged position under your wise and able leadership.

"We also look with anticipation to the privilege of welcoming you in Jordan in the near future to give us the opportunity of expressing to you and your brotherly people, the high esteem and deep affection with which we hold you.

"With my best wishes for your continued good health and further prosperity for your brotherly and dear country."

U.S.-PLO dialogue launched

TUNIS (Agencies) — American and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials met for 90 minutes Friday in their first official face-to-face talks on peace in the Middle East, ending a long U.S. boycott of the Palestinian organisation.

"Our discussions were practical and characterised, I would say, by seriousness of purpose," U.S. Ambassador Robert H. Pelletreau told reporters following his meeting with a four-man PLO delegation headed by Yasser Abd-Rabbo, a member of the PLO Executive Committee.

The first meeting, coming just two days after Washington declared the PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's recent statements on reconstituting terrorism and recognising Israel met longstanding conditions for beginning contacts, took place in an official Tunisian government guest residence in suburban Carthage, north of Tunis.

Pelletreau was accompanied to the talks by Edmund Hull, political counselor at the American embassy in Tunis.

Each side made separate statements after the meeting.

Abd-Rabbo called the first session "practical and constructive."

"We hope this dialogue will bring us closer to an international conference on the Middle East," he said.

"We hope this dialogue will continue and we think it will continue."

Although the United States moved fast to arrange Friday's talks, a second meeting may not take place until after President-elect George Bush takes office Jan. 20.

Abd-Rabbo and Pelletreau made statements reflecting the differences between the PLO and the United States over how to set about ending the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Abd-Rabbo said the PLO thought the aim was to speed up the convening of a U.N.-sponsored international peace conference involving all the parties concerned.

"The PLO had done everything to make this process as easy as possible," he said.

Pelletreau, on the other hand, said: "It is our hope that this dialogue, as it develops, will bring about direct negotiations that will lead to a comprehensive peace."

Arafat met with West German officials on Thursday. In a joint statement, the two sides said the U.S. move "can only be beneficial."

The dialogue is constructive for the peace process in the Middle East and should lead to negotiations between the parties involved at a United Nations sponsored international peace conference, it said.

In Chantilly, Virginia, President Reagan, in a farewell address on international affairs, acclaimed the U.S. Congress Friday of underwriting some of his foreign initiatives and said his opening to the PLO

showed that hardline U.S. policies pay off.

"Where Congress and the president have engaged each other as adversaries — as over Central America — U.S. policies have faltered and our common purposes have not been achieved," Reagan said in a major foreign policy speech at the University of Virginia.

"Where we are strong and steadfast, we succeed," he added, and illustrated the point with reference to the historic new breakthrough in the U.S.-PLO relations.

The Arab World has hailed the United States' decision to talk with the PLO as an important step that could produce long-awaited resolution of the Palestine question.

Except for Israel, most other countries — including East Germany, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Australia and Japan — also looked favourably on the development.

"This is a great step by a great nation," said Mohammad Milhem, a former Palestinian mayor in Halhoul and member of the PLO's ruling Executive Committee.

PLO spokesman Ahmad Abdol Rahman in Geneva called the U.S. move "a historic turning point" that he hoped will lead to U.S. recognition of Palestinians' right to an independent state.

U.N. votes for Mideast conference

GENEVA (Agencies) — The U.N. General Assembly has called overwhelmingly for the convening of an international Middle East peace conference and for temporarily placing the Israeli-occupied territories under U.N. supervision. The United States and Israel voted against the action.

The vote on the resolution Thursday came after the new U.S. willingness to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) drew a widely positive response.

The final tally was 138-2, with two abstentions, Canada and Costa Rica. Iran did not participate in the vote, and Libya and Syria voted "yes" with reservations; saying they did not recognise Israel, which was mentioned in the resolution.

The vote closed out a three-day debate on Palestine which was held in Geneva after the United States refused to grant PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat a visa to speak at the United Nations in New York.

The main resolution passed by the General Assembly calls for the convening of an international conference under U.N. auspices "with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation, on an equal footing..."

It requests the U.N. Security Council to establish a preparatory committee for convening the conference.

The resolution "affirms" principles for achieving comprehensive peace, including "the withdrawal of Israel from the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, under the supervision of the United Nations for a limited period, as part of the peace

process."

A separate resolution "acknowledges the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council" Nov. 15.

It says that effective Dec. 15, the designation "Palestine" will replace "Palestine Liberation Organisation" in the U.N. system, but the move did not amount to U.N. recognition of a Palestinian state.

That resolution passed 104-2, with the United States and Israel again opposed. Thirty-six countries abstained.

U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar welcomed the U.S. move as "excellent news." He said it created "much more favourable" conditions for the U.N. to call an international Middle East peace conference including the PLO.

U.N. spokesman Francois Giuliani said Perez de Cuellar was to return to New York Friday to begin consultations aimed at speeding up the peace process.

Hours after the U.S. decision was announced in Washington, the Soviet Union offered to restore relations with Israel as soon as efforts got under way to convene a Middle East peace conference.

France to cut force in Chad

CASABLANCA, Morocco (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand said Friday that France would reduce its military force in Chad, which has improved ties with Libya after years of border clashes. He told Chadian President Hissene Habre at a private meeting of the widely-expected decision, which follows last month's agreement by Chad and Libya to restore diplomatic relations. "France intends to trim the Epcivier system which was set up to organise the defence of Chad against an invasion," Mitterrand told a news conference at the end of a two-day Franco-African summit in Casablanca. At the peak of operation Epcivier (sparrowhawk), which began in 1986, France had 1,800 soldiers and airmen stationed in the Central African country. A senior French source told Reuters the size of the force had been cut to 1,200 men but the operation still cost 30 million francs (\$5 million) a month. Habre wants a strong French garrison to remain in case of renewed conflict with Libya. The two countries agreed to a ceasefire in September last year after 15 years of warring over the disputed Aozou Strip.

U.N. reports no progress in efforts to revive Iran-Iraq talks

GENEVA (R) — Peace negotiations with Iran and Iraq, taking place on the fringe of this week's U.N. debate on Palestine, failed even to produce a date for a new round of talks, U.N. mediator Jan Eliasson said Friday.

"Unfortunately we can still not report progress on the major issues," Eliasson said before leaving Geneva. He added: "We had a thorough discussion."

Eliasson and U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar took advantage of the General Assembly debate on Palestine to discuss the Gulf war talks in separate meetings with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz and Iranian Ambassador Sirous Naseri.

"The secretary-general has taken no decision on a date, but we hope to have some form of contacts with the two sides early in the new year. It is not certain what form those contacts will take," said Eliasson, a Swedish diplomat.

Diplomatic sources said the

U.N. team would be reluctant to convene new direct talks unless one or both of the parties was ready to be more flexible.

"There's no way they're going to convene another conference unless they (Iran and Iraq) have got something to offer," a European diplomat commented.

He said doing so could actually be dangerous in that the two sides might simply harden their positions.

The sources said Perez de Cuellar and/or Eliasson, whom the secretary-general named as his special representative for the Gulf, might visit Tehran and Baghdad to seek concessions from the leaders there rather than calling a new meeting soon in Geneva.

The talks began after the Aug.

20 Gulf war ceasefire. The third round ended Nov. 11 deadlocked on the most important issues of withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Iran and an exchange of more than 100,000 prisoners of war (PoWs).

Although it was not specifically on the agenda, the question of who owns the Shatt Al Arab waterway proved even more thorny. It was one of the factors behind the war that broke out in September, 1980.

Hopes for progress on these issues were raised when the two sides agreed during the third round to exchange their sick and wounded PoWs, probably numbering a few thousand.

But the actual exchange broke down after only 211 prisoners were repatriated, when Iran failed to present the agreed number in each exchange and Iraq then retaliated by cutting the numbers of Iranians it would allow to go home.

Text of Reagan's statement

FOLLOWING is the text of a statement by U.S. President Ronald Reagan authorising the State Department to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The statement was issued late Wednesday by the White House press secretary:

"The Palestine Liberation Organisation today issued a statement in which it accepted United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognised Israel's right to exist, and renounced terrorism. These have long been our conditions for a substantive dialogue. They have been met.

Therefore, I have authorised the State Department to enter into substantive dialogue with PLO representatives. The Palestine Liberation Organisation must live up to its statements. In particular, it must demonstrate that its renunciation of terrorism is pervasive and permanent.

"The initiation of a dialogue between the United States and PLO representatives is an important step in the peace process, the more so because it represents the serious evolution of Palestinian thinking towards realistic and pragmatic positions on the key issues. But the objective of the United States remains, as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

"In that light, I view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties which alone can lead to such a peace."

"Nothing here may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the United States of an independent Palestinian state. The position of the U.S. is that the status of the West Bank and Gaza cannot be determined by unilateral acts of either side but only through a process of negotiations. The United States does not recognise the declaration of an independent Palestinian state.

"It is also important to emphasise that the United States' commitment to the security of Israel remains unflinching."

Shultz' statement

Shortly after the president's statement was released, Secretary of State George Shultz announced that he has designated Robert H. Pelletreau, U.S. ambassador to Tunisia, as the "only authorised channel for that dialogue." Shultz announced the decision in a televised press conference.

Following is the text of Shultz's prepared remarks:

"The Palestine Liberation Organisation today issued a statement in which it accepted U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, recognised Israel's right to exist in peace and security, and renounced terrorism. As a result, the United States is prepared for a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives.

"I am designating our ambassador to Tunisia as the only authorised channel for that dialogue. The objective of the United States remains, as always, a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

"In that light, I view this development as one more step toward the beginning of direct negotiations between the parties which alone can lead to such a peace."

"Nothing here may be taken to imply an acceptance or recognition by the United States of an independent Palestinian state. The position of the U.S. is that the status of the West Bank and Gaza cannot be determined by unilateral acts of either side but only through a process of negotiations. The United States does not recognise the declaration of an independent Palestinian state.

"It is also important to emphasise that the United States' commitment to the security of Israel remains unflinching."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel jails 'Soviet spy' for 9 years

TEL AVIV (R) — Shabtai Kalmanovich, a Russian-born businessman who mixed with leading Israeli politicians and army officers, was jailed for nine years Thursday for passing secrets to Soviet intelligence. Kalmanovich, 43 who immigrated in 1971, pleaded guilty to espionage and contact with a foreign agent as part of a plea bargain with prosecutors who dropped a more serious charge of spying with intent to harm state security. Lawyers refused to discuss persistent reports that Israel might trade Kalmanovich in a three-way swap with the Soviet Union and the United States, involving the release of Jonathan and Anne Pollard, American Jews convicted of spying for Israel.

Jurists say birth control permissible

KUWAIT (R) — A leading body of Muslim jurists ruled Thursday that birth control is permissible in Islam if man and wife agreed. "Temporary birth control is allowed in order to separate periods of pregnancy... provided that the spouses consult and consent in accordance with Islamic law," the Islamic Fiqh (Jurisprudence) Academy said. The academy, which represents jurists from 46 Islamic countries, ended a six-day conference on ethical issues Thursday. It ruled that laws limiting the freedom to procreate were against Islam, as were operations to sterilise men or women. It said birth control techniques must be legitimate and not cause harm.

4 injured in Gulf mine explosion

ABU DHABI (R) — Four Indian fishermen were injured when their vessel struck a mine in the Gulf close to the Strait of Hormuz, Al Ittihad newspaper reported Thursday. It said the mine exploded Wednesday off Sharjah in Ras Al Khaimah. The fishermen were rescued by local sailors and rushed to a nearby hospital. One was in critical condition, the newspaper said. The U.S. navy blew up a mine found drifting in the central Gulf off Bahrain Sunday.

Egypt, Israel place new border markers

CAIRO (R) — Egypt and Israel have begun placing 14 new border markers in Sinai in accordance with a verdict by an international arbitration panel, an Egyptian official said. Ibrahim Youssri, director of the legal department of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, told reporters Thursday he expected the new markers to be in place within two to three weeks.

Toxic waste in Lebanon to return to Italy

LA SPEZIA, Italy (R) — About 8,000 barrels of Italian toxic chemical waste dumped in Lebanon will be shipped to the Italian port of La Spezia, the city council said Thursday. Mayor Bruno Montefiori said the council had agreed to an Italian government request to allow the consignment to dock on condition that the nature of the waste was identified and that it did not stay in La Spezia longer than necessary.

U.N. troops in Cyprus get 6 more months

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council agreed unanimously Thursday to keep U.N. troops in Cyprus for a further six months. The force, known as UNFICYP, has been on duty in the island since 1964 when it went in following civil war between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. UNFICYP comprises a little more than 2,000 troops and police from eight countries. The largest contingent, 741 strong, is from Britain.

Afghan rebel rockets kill nine

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan rebels killed nine people in a rocket attack on the eastern town of Mazar-i-Sharif Thursday, the official Kabul Radio said. The broadcast said 11 people were injured when the rebels fired rockets into residential areas of Mazar-i-Sharif, capital of Baghlan province. The guerrillas have launched frequent rocket attacks on Afghan town since Moscow began withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan last May under U.N.-mediated accords.

Elias Sarkis' brother arrested

NEW YORK (AP) — The brother of a former Lebanese president was arrested Thursday at Kennedy international airport on charges he tried to smuggle 2.2 kilograms of heroin into the country, federal authorities said. Gebrayel Sarkis, 70, was arrested by agents of the U.S. Customs Service following a flight from Switzerland, said Amy Driscoll, a spokeswoman for U.S. attorney Andrew Maloney. Driscoll said Sarkis was a brother of Elias Sarkis, who served as president of Lebanon from 1976 to 1982. Elias Sarkis died in June 1985 at age 60. No further details about the arrest were immediately available.

S. Yemen gets \$5.6m health loan

WASHINGTON (AP) — The government of South Yemen will get loans of \$5.6 million from the World Bank and the United Nations to improve health care, it was announced Thursday. Of the \$5.6 million being loaned to South Yemen, \$4.5 million will come from the World Bank's International Development Association. Its loan is repayable in 40 years, including 10 years during which only interest is payable at 0.75 of one per cent a year. The rest of the money is being lent by the World Health Organisation and three U.N. funds for children, capital development and population activities. The money will help the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen construct 19 new buildings, including a nursing school, and upgrade 26 others. Some of it also will go to buy medical supplies and family planning material. About 400,000 people in the remote areas of the Arabian Peninsula will benefit, according to the World Bank announcement.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Paul Daniels Magic Show

21:10 Alfred Hitchcock "Murder Party"

21:35 Saturday Variety Show

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film: "Died on a Rainy Day"

PRAYER TIMES

19:30 Kuran

19:45 Programmatic review

19:55 Children programme

16:30 Educational programmes

16:40 "Circus"

17:30 Educational programme

18:00 News summary

18:05 Message from Iraq

18:15 Arabic series

19:10 Local programme

19:40 Programmatic review

19:45 News in Arabic

20:30 Arabic series

21:45 Programmatic review

21:50 Local programme

23:00 News summary in Arabic

23:10 Arabic play (condol.)

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 L'affaire Saint Romans

19:00 News in French

19:15 French varieties

19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Paul Daniels Magic Show

21:10 Alfred Hitchcock "Murder Party"

21:35 Saturday Variety Show

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film: "Died on a Rainy Day"

CHURCHES

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

637440. De la Salle Church Tel. 621757
Terrance Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 622541.

Anglican Church Tel. 623383. Tel. 628543.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 683326.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.

Rainbow Congregation Tel. 822605.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 813817, 821264

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be relatively cold and partly

cloudy with a chance for scattered rain. Winds will be southwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with northwesterly moderate winds and calm sea.

Amman 8 / 14

Abu Dhabi 10 / 18

Deserts 5 / 15

Jordan Valley 10 / 19

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Suliman Al Khayyat 791880

Dr. Basim Al Qudra 646024

Dr. Munzer Al Qudra 776258

Dr. Issa Abu Haider 637123

Firdous pharmacy 661912
Firdous pharmacy 658000

Prix Complaints 637055

Water and Sewerage 623672

Complaints 697467

Amman Municipality

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information

(direction assistance) 12

Overseas Calls 17

Central Animal Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordas Telefonia 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordas Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 648411, 636381

National News

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY DECEMBER 17, 1988 3

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

REGENT CONGRATULATES BAHRAIN: His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein, the Regent, Thursday sent a cable to Emir of Bahrain Sheikh Issa Ibn Salman Al Khalifa congratulating him in his own name and on behalf of Jordan's people and government on Bahrain's Independence Day. He wished Sheikh Issa continued good health and the Bahraini people further progress and prosperity. (Petra)

CHARITY BAZAAR: The Crown Prince award office Friday held a charity bazaar at the Amman International Baccalaureate School, which included handicrafts, traditional dresses, flowers and decorative plants, in addition to cultural and scientific books, children's stories, toys, computers, theatre performances and folk dances. Proceeds from the bazaar will be used to support the award's projects which aim to develop the capabilities of the youth in the various social, cultural and sports fields. The bazaar was attended by their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvatheh (Petra)

PRINCE GHAZI CONDOLES MAJALI FAMILY: His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ibn Mohammad Friday visited the Al Majali family in Al Rahab township conveying condolences on the death of the late Sheikh Abdur Qadir Mubarak Al Majali. (Petra)

KHLEIFAT ATTENDS SHOOTING COMPETITION: Youth Minister Dr. Awad Khleifat Friday presented His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, at the national shooting competition which was held at the Royal Shooting Club. The Jordan Intercontinental Hotel has organised this event as part of the celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of its establishment. At the end of the competition, Dr. Khleifat distributed the hotel's cups to the first three winners of the participating Skeets and Traps teams. The first three winners from the Traps and Skeets teams were Abdullah Al Luhayneq, Dr. Ziyad Al Ousus, Nikola Abu Ghazalah; and Radi Abu Al Ragheb, Adel Abu Al Ragheb, and Basbar Dahabah respectively. The competition was attended by a number of officials, diplomats and a large group of Jordanians. (Petra)

HAJ HASSAN, EGYPTIAN ENVOY HOLD TALKS: Transport and Telecommunications Minister Khaled Al Haj Hassan Thursday received the Egyptian ambassador in Amman. They discussed bilateral cooperation in the fields of transport and telecommunications. (Petra)

TOUQAN RECEIVES U.K. ENVOY: Social Development Minister Dr. Fawwaz Touqan Thursday received the British ambassador in Amman. They discussed bilateral relations and means to bolster cooperation particularly in the field of social work. (Petra)

LUFTHANSA GETS NEW DIRECTOR: Lufthansa Middle East Regional Director Mayor Hoover held a reception party in honour of Lufthansa Director in Amman Karim Jouri, at the end of Jouri's term, and to welcome the new director Von Witter. Mr. Jouri has been working with Lufthansa for thirty years from the time its offices were opened in Amman. He played a major role in reactivating tourism between Germany and Jordan and consequently cemented bilateral relations during his years of service. The reception was attended by Tourism Minister Zuhair Ajlonni in addition to a large number of airline directors, agents, and a number of officials. (J.T.)

SAFADI MEETS TUNISIAN ENVOY: Jordan News Agency Director General Ali Al Safadi Thursday received Tunisian Ambassador in Amman Mohammad Al Manji Al Habibi. They discussed cooperation between JNA and Tunisian News Agency in addition to the prospects of signing a cooperation agreement between the two agencies so as to serve the common interests of the two countries. (Petra)

CHILD DENTISTRY: A seminar on child dentistry was held Thursday at the Faculty of Science and Technology at the University of Jordan. Discussion focused on early care in child teeth and the relationship between nutrition as applied to pregnant mothers and condition of child teeth. (Petra)



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Thursday meets President Abdullah Khathib and members of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (Petra photo)

Princess Basma praises works of Jordan's voluntary institutions

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAJSWF), Thursday voiced appreciation for the achievements made by the voluntary institutions in Jordan during the past few years and stressed the need for coordination among all institutions.

At a meeting with the president and members of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), Princess Basma was briefed by GUVS President Abdullah Khathib on the union's

achievements and future plans.

Princess Basma was also briefed by GUVS officials on the projects and charitable and social programmes currently carried out by the union.

She expressed hope that next year will witness further cooperation and coordination, by social and voluntary workers in Jordan.

Princess Basma paid tribute to the achievements made by GUVS, landed its efforts to continue its work to further its objectives and its humanitarian mission.

Dr. Khathib praised Princess Basma's efforts and her con-

tinuous support for the social work, saying: such support and untiring work reflects the interest of the country's leadership in providing optimal life for all citizens throughout the Kingdom."

Khathib highlighted the role of social work institutions, saying that it supplements the work of the official institutions in achieving comprehensive development.

Khathib noted that when social security is provided, then citizenship is realised, and when citizenship is realised, social security is achieved.

London Ambulance Department pays tribute to 2 Jordanian trainees

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of London Ambulance Department has paid tribute to the excellent role played by two Jordanian civil defence men, currently taking part in a training course held in London Ambulance Department,

during the collision which took place between two trains in Britain several days ago.

In a cable to Civil Defence Department (CDD) Director Khaled Tarawneh, the London

Ambulance Department director said that the two Jordanian civil defence men volunteered to take part in the rescue and first aid operation. They have played an active role in rescuing the injured and in providing first aid.



Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Thursday receives a delegation from the World Bank

Hamzeh, visiting World Bank team review health projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Thursday reviewed with a visiting World Bank team currently on a visit to Jordan, the projects carried out with funds from the World Bank, including the construction of 38 health centres throughout the Kingdom.

Hamzeh explained to the two

member team that the comprehensive health centres provide general health care, mother and child health services, school health services, immunisation, and major specialised services, such as surgery and optical care.

The World Bank financed health projects, include the

establishment of 25 primary health care centres, 13 comprehensive health centres and developing existing 13 health centres, 3 of which will become comprehensive health care centres while the remaining ten will serve as primary health care centres.

Hamzeh

levels. "It is recommended that supervision with the definite purpose of assisting for improving the performance of the worker be carried out at different levels by different levels of supervision," the recommendations read.

Monitoring and evaluation should be built into the health programmes so that achievements can be measured during different phases of implementation. They should be essential components of the managerial process, the final recommendations stated.

Conference participants noted that health system research should be operational (action-oriented) and applied to health care at every level, and should shed light on how resources can be best utilised for effective delivery of services.

Intersectoral collaboration and community participation, the participants noted, were important supporting factors for primary health care. Thus, and in order to improve the quality of life of future mothers, the conference recommended that "governments should take a broad view in the development of women through an intersectoral approach."

At the end of the meeting participants sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein thanking him and the government of Jordan for hosting the seminar.

Hmoud: Situation does not constitute a real threat

Locusts enter Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Swarms of desert locusts have reached the southern parts of Jordan covering three square kilometres in the south Jaffer and Al Sahar Al Asmar region, and five square kilometres near the Jordan-Saudi border, Agriculture Minister Marwan Al Hmoud said.

Speaking at a press conference Thursday, Hmoud said, efforts to fight the locusts started immediately and that the necessary teams from both the ministry and the Jordanian Armed Forces have been properly equipped with the necessary equipment for that purpose.

Hmoud said Al Jaffer Airport has been equipped for use as a base for pesticide-spraying aircraft. He said the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation and other international organisations, in addition to Saudi Arabia, have been contacted in order to coordinate necessary help to fight off the locusts.

The minister said that combating the locusts was a national responsibility which needed extra effort, awareness and contribu-

tion. He added that though the situation at present did not constitute "a real threat" it still required necessary preparation for the present and the future.

The government had allocated the necessary amount of money for the campaign so that the equipment and pesticides can be available for use in future threats of invasions which may continue until early May. Hmoud said, adding that the campaign will be boosted on the national level and at all sites.

Hmoud stressed the important role of citizens at all levels in participating in the campaign, and added that the ministry will advise farmers on the use of pesticides in fighting off locusts.

The ministry's Secretary General Salem Al Lawzi said that

other swarms of desert locusts have entered Jordan through the Al Mudawarah region covering a space of 12 square kilometres.

He said 12 teams equipped with pesticides and spraying equipment have been mobilised to fight the swarms. The Jordanian Armed Forces, the Royal Jordanian Air Force, the Badia Forces as well as the Public Security Police have offered the necessary equipment, such as special surveillance and spraying planes for that purpose.

A special operations room has been set up at the ministry where experts in that field are coordinating with all concerned parties in order to fight the locusts, he said.

Lawzi said desert locusts are considered one of the most dangerous threats to plants and agricultural produce and that fighting those needed coordination between citizens and all parties concerned.

The minister Thursday visited the areas affected by the swarms and inspected the efforts of the combat teams.



Minister of Agriculture Marwan Al Hmoud Thursday speaks at a press conference in Amman (Petra photo)

Jordanian-Scandinavian Friendship Association elects new board

AMMAN (J.T.) — The new board of Jordanian-Scandinavian Friendship Association held its first meeting Thursday Dec. 8. The members greeted Their Royal Highnesses Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid and Princess Majda and thanked them for their honorary presidency of the association, their patronage and support.

Zuhair Afouti was elected chairman of the association; Tawfiq Kawar, vice chairman; George Khoury, Treasurer; and

Tette Wegelin, Secretary, Numan Rusheidat and Stephanie Khalifeh were elected members of the board.

The board proceeded to discuss ways and means to strengthen the relations between Jordanians and Scandinavians, to develop tourism between the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland and Iceland — and Jordan by promoting and circulating touristic information

about Jordan, benefiting from the direct flights connecting Jordan with Scandinavia to carry tourists and businessmen and to transport Jordanian goods, vegetables and fruits.

The board also discussed the necessity of arranging local excursions to historical and touristic sites in Jordan, as well as providing training courses for the Jordanians at the Scandinavian factories to benefit from their advanced technology and know-how.

Curtain goes up for musical 'gingerbread man' on Sunday

By Meg Abu Hamdan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Saturday night sees the opening performance of the Royal Theatre Company's production of the musical "The Gingerbread Man." Directed by Vanessa Batrouni, the play promises to carry all the hallmarks that have become associated with her work — professionalism, pace, colour and innovation — and although the play is meant for children Batrouni guarantees that adults will thoroughly enjoy the show's humour too.

THEATRE REVIEW

"Although 'The Gingerbread Man' has all the elements that appeal to children — lots of action and audience participation, goodies and baddies and the fantasy of animating objects coming alive to the dead of the night — it will appeal to adults because it is very funny," Batrouni told the Jordan Times. "The humour comes mostly from the characterisations. For example the mouse, the bad guy, is a George Raft type of character who constantly muddles his words, while the gingerbread man is like a new born baby."

Household characters

Written by David Woods, the play tells the story of how the objects on a kitchen shelf — a salt pot (played by Peter Rose), a pepper pot (Lexi Haddadin), a cuckoo clock (Birgitte Malhus), a gingerbread man (Jim Clarke), and an old teashop (Kay Mukhar) aided by a mouse (Richard Hillstrand) all get together to help the cuckoo get back his voice — for without it he is useless and about to be relegated to the rubbish bin. The whole plot, through the old teashop in particular, carries a little message that by helping others you yourself become happier. Batrouni first saw the play when it was originally staged at the Old Vic in London and particularly enjoyed it for being a Christmas show without the typical pantomime format. Batrouni also liked the musical score, written by the author of the play himself.

"The score is very jazzy but full of musical clichés so that it feels very familiar, very comfortable. The tunes are very catchy and I've found that even after only

hearing them once, children can sing them easily," Batrouni, who plays the musical accompaniment herself on the piano, explained.

Original set

The set designed by artist, Nawal Kattan, is very big, bright and modern. It attempts to get away from the stereotyped image of an old world type of kitchen. Painted in bright primary colours the set was constructed by the students at the Salt School for the

CONGRATULATIONS

FOLLOWING are the names of the winners of the Gingerbread Man's Contest:

5 YEARS AND UNDER

1st prize: Gift from Istiklal: Shada Nabil Al Shanj Age 5, P.O. Box 708 Al Ali 2nd prize: Free tickets, Lana F. Haddadin Age 3½, P.O. Box 3103 3rd prize: Free tickets, Sabra Sabra Age 5, P.O. Box 48 Sababi

6-11 YEARS GROUP

1st prize: Gift from Istiklal, Ann Bayouk Age 8½, P.O. Box 922750, Amman 2nd prize: Gift from Istiklal, Maria Khoury Age 11, P.O. Box 25072 3rd prize: Free tickets, Abdu Kader Abu Al Seoud Age 8, c/o Plaza Hotel, P.O. Box 950629

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Giant leap for peace

WASHINGTON'S decision to engage the PLO in a dialogue is indeed a breakthrough for peace in the Middle East. It took the U.S. much valuable time to understand what the PLO has been saying and offering in support of the so-called "conditions" imposed on the Palestinian side by Washington and Israel. But finally the words of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat have soaked in and what ensued was truly a giant leap forward in the direction towards a durable and just peace between the Arabs and Israelis. Words of praise and appreciation to the U.S. are certainly in order for the courageous step that it has taken to enter into negotiations with the Palestinian side. But the biggest credit goes to the PLO for daring to take chances and risks for the sake of achieving peace. The magnitude of this Palestinian gamble for peace can be best gauged by the intensity of Israel's negative reaction to it. Unfortunately Israel's fossilized leadership was at its worst by showing their true rejectionist colour of the trust ever opportunity for peace in the Middle East. For Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to call the American decision to talk with the PLO a sad day for Israel can only mean one thing: opportunities for permanent peace cause sorrow for the Israeli establishment. And for Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to conclude that the U.S. decision would encourage terrorism is the most lopsided logic that mankind has ever heard. Could it possibly be true that Shamir, Sharon and their clique do not understand that rebuffing all the Palestinian and Arab overtures for peace is the real prescription for a continuous cycle of terror in the Middle East? The real answer to these perplexing Israeli reactions lies in the fact that the existing leadership in Israel have gotten used to war and war-like conditions for so long that an environment of genuine peace has become a hostile environment for them, one in which they cannot survive and flourish. Judging by their initial reaction to the Palestinian offers for peace on the same very terms that they have always advocated, one has to conclude that there is a real psychological barrier between them and peace. Hopefully with time the negative voices in Israel would acquire the kind of state of mind which is indispensable for permanent peace with the Arab side. The best response that the world can have to the Israeli panic at the onset of peace in the region is to ignore it and continue constructing the other blocks for the peace process.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily Friday tackled the question of dialogue between the United States and the PLO and said that though the United States had previously recognised U.N. Security Council Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine it has failed to recognise the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We would like to see Washington accepting the idea of an international peace conference for the sake of implementing all U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Palestine question and prove that it is genuinely oriented towards reviving the peace process, the paper noted. Washington it said is invited to open the dialogue as soon as possible because the time element is very important and Washington is invited to free itself from Israel's shackles and to refrain from demanding a halt of the uprising until the Palestinian rights have been restored.

Al Dustour daily commented on King Hussein's meeting with President Mubarak in Cairo which it described as of great significance in the wake of the U.S. announcement of its decision to open a dialogue with the PLO. The paper praised the combined efforts of Jordan and Egypt which bore fruit in Washington and which paved the way for this constructive step that could lead to a lasting peace. The U.S. decision, the paper continued, has created a new situation in the Middle East region and proved that Washington's hitherto hostile attitude towards the PLO could not achieve anything and that end to such hostility could bring peace to everyone.

Sawt Al Shaab daily said that King Hussein has been dedicating all his efforts and his time to the Palestine cause and his endeavours worldwide have no doubt contributed towards the overwhelming support by the world community to the Palestinians and their fight. The paper said that in his contacts with Arab leaders and in his talks abroad specially in Europe, King Hussein had aimed at one thing: to end the sufferings of the Palestinian people and re-establish peace in the region. It said that the King's efforts have clearly paved the way for the U.S. decision to open talks with the PLO, a move that could pave the way for a lasting peace.

Writing in Al Ra'i Arabic daily columnist Ibrahim Sakkijha says that Washington's decision to open a dialogue with the PLO serves as an official recognition of the organisation which leads the struggle for freedom in Palestine. The writer says that the U.S. opted for this step after finding itself alone with Israel completely isolated from the rest of the world and the world community which had decided to back the PLO's bid for peace. With the decision George Shultz meant to free his country from Israel's tutelage and to show that Washington can take its own decisions any time in matters that concern its national interest, the writer adds.

Another columnist writes in Al Dustour about the same topic pointing out that Washington's decision to open dialogue with the PLO came as a result of the heavy sacrifices on the part of the people of Palestine. Mu'nef Al Razzaq says that now that Washington has taken the first step in the right direction we hope that the socialist countries and friends of the Arabs would take more and bolder steps by imposing three conditions on Israel to help the cause of peace in the Middle East. These he says should be a clear declaration on the part of the Jewish state that it renounces terrorism, will stop all act of aggression against the Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories and to accept the proposed international peace conference and the rights of the Palestinians in their homeland.

One year of the intifada: achievements outweigh losses

By Ian Black

ENTERING Jabaliya camp when it is under curfew is much harder now than a year ago today, when the Palestinian uprising first erupted.

Since then the Israelis have blocked off the sandy paths through the citrus groves and the barriers of oil drums at the entrances have grown higher than a man; the barbed wire is rusting. When soldiers come past, unwillingly with their visored helmets and teargas grenades, you have to bob and weave through the rubbish-strewn alleys and take shelter in the mean breeze-block houses.

A single whispered word — "jaysh" (army) — opens any door. Over bitter coffee and cigarettes, the camp dwellers readily share their balance sheet of the intifada with the uninvited guest.

Despite the sacrifices — at least 320 dead and thousands of injured and imprisoned — the Palestinians believe their national account is well in their favour.

"However had our suffering been, the intifada is the best time we have ever known," says a middle-aged teacher. "Now there is hope for the future."

It is a familiar refrain: from Jenin in the northern West Bank, through remote villages hidden in the folds of stony hills, in semi-tropical Jericho, down to the sand-end of Rafah at the southern end of the Gaza Strip, you can

hear Palestinians reflecting on the achievements.

This buoyant mood has not escaped their rulers. A few months ago the Israelis were still talking bravely about crushing the uprising, applying maximum military and administrative pressure at periods of maximum exhaustion to finally restore order. Now the intifada is a fact of life — a way of life — for them as well.

"Those who argue that there is a military solution to the uprising don't know what they're talking about," insists one Israeli official.

"This is not like Gaza in 1970, when there were 300 wanted men and the army went from house to house crossing out names until they got to the bottom of the list. This is a mass movement. Every time you cross out one name, one or two more replace it."

Technology is no answer either: this week, in the Samarian uplands, an army commander used his Hatzazzit gravel cannon — a monstrous, Heath Robinson creation — to playfully pepper Israeli hitch-hikers with the doughnuts eaten on the Hannukah holiday. It has not stopped Palestinian stone-throwers.

Repression has its limits, and the lumbering tools of the Israelis' trade are often more ridiculous than effective. A converted trooper carrier — burdened by wire mesh, loudspeakers, searchlights and shovels for shifting roadblocks and burning tyres — is known to soldiers as Chitty-Chitty-Bang-Bang.

Not that the violence itself is a real threat to the occupation: the year's Israeli casualty figures — six civilians and two soldiers — bear this out eloquently.

No sane Palestinian claims that the stones, the petrol bombs and the masked shabab have actually defeated the most powerful army in the Middle East.

The Palestinians have come to

spent eight months in the desert prison camp at Ketziot — Ansar III to the Palestinians — is eating heartily these days and reminiscing with unmistakable pride about life behind the wire. His support for the PLO has not waned and it can only be a matter of time before he is picked up by the Shin Bet security service again.

whether you believe the Palestinian or the Israeli version, or opt for the independent estimate in the middle — are a grim reminder that these can be deadly games, even when supposedly "non-lethal" weapons like plastic bullets and tear-gas are being used.

Yet for all this, the intifada is more a state of mind than an insurrection: on days when there are no curfews or strikes called by the underground PLO-backed United National Leadership, the day-labourers still stream across the old "green line" to work in Israel proper; there are still huge queues outside the civil administration buildings for the permits and licences necessary to do virtually everything but breathe.

The uprising has succeeded brilliantly in many ways — most of all in putting the Palestinian cause back on the top of the international agenda and creating unprecedented unity in Palestinian ranks.

Hamas, the Gaza-based Islamic movement, is widely regarded as serving Israeli interests, although only the most conspiratorial will now claim that the fundamentalists are a creation of Shin Bet.

Heroin and high morale is one thing, but living one's life is another: "My main problem is the children," complains a mother-of-three in Nablus.

"They've got used to not going to school, not reading, not thinking, just sitting at home watching TV. I'm afraid to send them to

their friends across the road but on the other hand I can't force them to stay in the house and do nothing. I worry so much when they go out. They're just not scared, not of the soldiers and not of the bullets."

The extraordinary high level of political awareness among ostensibly simple people is at its most impressive when the thorny subject of armed struggle is raised. "We will do whatever the United Leadership orders," is the most familiar response.

But, if pressed, most Palestinians will argue hotly that the stone is more effective than the Kalashnikov — even if there were enough weapons to do anything more than invite a massacre.

Looking out from Jabaliya a year on, one can only conclude that the intifada must take its place in history as a turning point in the Arab-Zionist conflict.

It is all too easy to be swayed by rhetoric, impressed by sacrifice and solidarity, taken in by brave words about time and destiny uttered from high moral ground. But the Palestinians, human in their weaknesses, incomplete in their achievements, still convince.

"From the very first day of the uprising," says a wealthy Gazan woman, "we began to have hope. We have suffered, but it is still far better than before. And we can go on like this, for another year, or for however long it takes to win our freedom and our rights."

— The Guardian.

Sri Lankan poll shapes up as democracy test

By Marilyn Odichmar
Reuter

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka is preparing for a presidential poll amid fears that violence, fraud and a low turnout could prove a crucial test for democracy in the island.

For most Sri Lankans, weary of five years of guerrilla war and growing unrest, peace and order are the top priorities.

Many say the security situation has deteriorated under a United National Party (UNP) government led by President Junius Jayewardene, who has ruled the island for 11 years and plans to retire after the Dec. 19 election.

Sirima Bandaranaike, the 72-year-old candidate of the main opposition Freedom Party (SLFP), now calls the country she twice governed "hitterly divided" and "leaderless."

"Those who promised free and just society... have converted

Sri Lanka into the killing fields of south Asia," she said.

Bandaranaike, who has been drawing increasing crowds since the campaign began on Nov. 10, claims she has a way of ending the five-year-old Tamil conflict in the northeast. She says she could also co-opt members of the Marxist People's Liberation Front (JVP) to give up their arms.

Police blame the Marxist front for killing more than 600 people, mostly supporters of the UNP and opposition parties.

The killings have provoked a backlash of murders and disappearances of suspected front members and sympathisers.

Since October, the front has spearheaded a civil disobedience campaign that crippled civil administration in the countryside and prompted Sri Lankans to ask if elections could be held at all.

Bandaranaike told Jayewardene in a letter last month that

essential services had been disrupted and an increasing number of political killings and other violence had caused fear and insecurity.

"If this trend continues, it will give the way to total anarchy quite soon," she said.

If polls do take place, many fear there would be either a low turnout or fraud and violence.

"What many people are hoping is that election results would be accepted as genuine and consequently that whoever is elected will have the legitimacy to restore law and order," said the chairman of a major bank.

Ranasinghe Premadasa, the 64-year-old prime minister and candidate of the ruling UNP, says he can restore peace once in power but, like Bandaranaike, has not specified how.

Like her, he says he will send home the 50,000 Indian troops stationed in the northeast to en-

force an Indo-Sri Lankan pact signed last year to end the revolt by the minority Tamil community.

Indian diplomats consider the anti-pact stance of both candidates mere election rhetoric.

Unlike Bandaranaike and Premadasa, the candidate of the Socialist People's Party (SLMP), Oswin Abeygunasekera, believes the Indian force should leave only after it has fulfilled its obligations under the accord.

Abeygunasekera proposes to offer self-determination rights to the Tamils.

Premadasa has proposed to give 2,500 rupees (\$80) a month to 1.4 million poor Sri Lankan families for two years in an elaborate scheme to ease poverty and unemployment.

That means a lot in a country where four out of 10 live below the poverty line and where the monthly average income is about

1,500 rupees (\$45).

Premadasa spends much time resurrecting the spectre of the food queues that wended through Bandaranaike's socialist era before the UNP won its 1977 mandate for a liberalised economy.

"It was a time when one couldn't find even a little coriander for a common cold. People drank their tea without sugar," he says.

Ronnie de Mel, finance minister until he defected to the SLFP early this year, said Bandaranaike must convince voters her economic policies would not be repeated.

Bandaranaike's response to the 2,500 rupee handout is a pledge to subsidise milk, rice, flour and sugar, as well as abolishing water tax.

Though economists privately question the viability of Premadasa's economic plan, it demonstrates the government's belief

that the current political unrest has its roots in poverty and unemployment.

The JVP, opposed to the Indo-Sri Lankan pact and clamouring for the withdrawal of the Indian troops, has its strongest hold in the southern province.

The south, a traditional leftist area and Bandaranaike's vote bank, has also the highest jobless rate at 26 per cent compared to the national average of 18 per cent.

Opposition leaders say the unrest there is the most serious since the country got independence from Britain in 1948.

Bandaranaike, who ruled from 1960-65 and 1970-77, says she left democracy intact, enabling the UNP to win a five-sixth majority in parliament in the last general elections in 1977.

She says democracy has been seriously eroded since.

Nicaragua turns to dollars to salvage economy

By Alister Doyle
Reuter

MANAGUA — Nicaragua's Communist government is using a U.S. weapon — the dollar — in its struggle to revive an economy battered by its eight-year war against Washington-funded rebels.

The U.S. currency is playing an ever larger role in Nicaragua, where runaway inflation is obliterating the local cordoba, and the government is dreaming up capitalist-style luxuries it can sell to obtain dollars.

Believing Nicaragua could become a tourist Mecca if President

elect George Bush abandons the contra war, the government is busy trying to lure foreigners to a land that President Reagan has called a "Marxist dungeon."

"In the next eight to 10 years we think that tourism could be a lifeline for the Nicaraguan economy," possibly earning hundreds of millions of dollars, Tourism Minister Herty Lewites said in an interview.

The U.S. currency is playing an ever larger role in Nicaragua, where runaway inflation is obliterating the local cordoba, and the government is dreaming up capitalist-style luxuries it can sell to obtain dollars.

Lewites said Central America is a virgin tourist area and that

Nicaragua has the attractions of a warm climate, beaches, volcanoes and lakes.

The first stage of a \$40 million tourist resort with accommodation for 1,500 is due to open next year on a palm-fringed Pacific beach.

The Montelimar resort, one of the largest in Latin America, will have its own airport, discoteques and the only casino in Nicaragua, housed in a mansion once owned by former dictator Anastasio Somoza.

Also under review is a plan to build cabins on dozens of small islands in lake Nicaragua and to rent them for dollars.

The government already runs several hotels and 11 shops around the country which are packed with imports ranging from chocolate cookies and fancy wines to air conditioners which can be bought only for dollars.

The stores will bring in an estimated \$40 million this year and \$60 million in 1989. Dollar hotels and other projects are likely to earn another \$20 million this year.

Bangladesh marks victory day without usual fanfare

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh, still reeling from recent floods and cyclone, marked its 17th victory anniversary Friday without the usual pageants and fanfare.

Guns boomed in salute and Chinese-built jets flew over Dhaka, but there was no traditional military parade, no carnival and no children's fair.

President Hossain Mohammad Ershad asked this poor nation of 105 million people to celebrate the day with austerity.

"Victory day is being observed against the backdrop of devastating floods and the cyclone which are still alive in our minds," he said in a message to the country.

"In a situation like this, we

cannot afford to be lavish."

Floods in August and September killed nearly 3,000 people, destroyed three million tonnes of rice and left 25 million people homeless. The cyclone Nov. 29 killed another 5,000 people and left a trail of devastation in the south.

Ershad laid wreaths Friday morning at the national monument, built in memory of those who died in the 1971 war which led to independence from Pakistan, with a call to rebuild a country which is also in political ferment.

Ershad came to power in 1981 in a military coup toppling an elected government and the country's major political parties are demanding fresh elections under a caretaker government.

In messages Friday Sheikh Hasina, leader of the country's biggest political party, the Awami League, and Khaleda Zia, head of Bangladesh Nationalist Party urged the people to unite against Ershad to force him to quit.

The Bangladeshi economy was severely dented by the floods and cyclone, further pushing down its growth rate.

A group of survivors from Bangladesh's worst cyclone and tidal wave in 20 years awaits relief

Vanuatu plunges into crisis

PONT VILA (R) — The South Pacific island chain of Vanuatu plunged into crisis Friday after Prime Minister Walter Lini ignored an order from President George Sokamau to dissolve parliament and hold elections.

"The president has no legal power to dissolve parliament. He can take such action only if the Council of Ministers advises him to do so," Lini told parliament within an hour of Sokamau's order.

He said the government would consider dismissing the head of state whose action was an attempt at a "political coup."

Sokamau, opening the budget session earlier in the day, said he was ordering elections for February as his appeals for a compromise between Lini and his opponents had failed.

Police and paramilitary forces moved into the capital to prevent a planned anti-government demonstration by Lini's rival, Barak Sope, who is also Sokamau's

nephew.

About 100 people led by Sope managed to assemble outside parliament but security forces, armed with automatic weapons and riot gear, dispersed them without violence.

Pont Vila was calm but security forces manned road blocks and barricades around the capital.

Lini, an Anglican priest who has led the nation since independence from joint Anglo-French rule in 1980, said parliament would ignore the president's ruling.

Vanuatu, about 800 kilometres west of Fiji, was formerly called the New Hebrides and has a population of 145,000 Melanesians.

It became a republic on independence and the president is appointed every five years. Sokamau, who has held the post since 1980, has about three more years in his current term.

Lini is still recovering from a severe stroke earlier this year. He

told members of parliament to "continue your work normally until all business is finished and have a good Christmas and new year."

Sokamau told reporters later that Monday's by-elections for 18 of parliament's 46 seats were a farce as only 37 per cent of voters cast their ballots.

The by-elections gave Lini's Vanuaku Party a two-thirds majority in the house.

"It shows that the people do not have faith in the present government... there should be a general election," Sokamau said.

He did not say how he would counter the government's decision to reject his order but said he felt he had to take a stand even though he knew his actions could not be supported by the letter of the constitution.

He said his action was prompted by worsening economic problems, aggravated by Vanuatu's continuing political feuding.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Moscow names chief of staff

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet Union announced Thursday the appointment of Far East Commander Colonel General Mikhail A. Moiseyev as the new chief of staff, giving the military its first leader too young for World War II combat experience. Moiseyev, 49, replaces Marshal Sergei F. Akhromeyev whose retirement was announced by Soviet officials in New York on Dec. 7, the same day that Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev told the United Nations that he would unilaterally cut the Soviet military. This caused speculation that the 65-year-old Akhromeyev was resigning in protest, which Soviet officials have denied. Moiseyev's appointment was announced with an official statement and front page picture in the Defense Ministry newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*. Its announcement also was the paper's first word of Akhromeyev's retirement. The appointment of a younger man likely signalled Gorbachev's determination to bring new faces into the military leadership, marking the passing of the generation that participated in Soviet Union victory over Nazi Germany in World War II.

Germany swaps prisoners

EAST BERLIN (R) — East and West Germany exchanged an undisclosed number of prisoners Thursday and Western diplomats said it appeared to be a spy swap. In one-sentence dispatch the official news agency ADN said the prisoners were handed over at a border crossing point between the two states under a bilateral agreement. The diplomats said the wording suggested the two sides had exchanged spies. In December last year the two countries swapped three agents each.

'Magic bullets' fight cancer

LONDON (R) — British scientists said Friday they had successfully treated cancer patients by targeting "magic bullet" antibodies against cancer cells. The scientists at the Nobel Prize-winning Molecular Biology Laboratory in Cambridge wrote in the *Lancet Medical Journal* that a 67-year-old retired professor and a woman suffering from leukaemia were now out of hospital. "We are not saying it is a cure, but all the cancer cells we could see have been destroyed. The significance of that is very great," Dr. Mike Clarke said. Monoclonal antibodies, known as magic bullets, can be targeted against bacteria, viruses or cancer cells, but until now their use has been severely limited because they were derived from mice and the body recognised them as foreign. The new magic bullet, called Campath, overcomes this

problem by combining human and rat antibodies in such a way that the body recognises them as human.

'M15 among the worst'

LONDON (AP) — The opposition Labour Party Thursday derided Britain's M15 Counter-Intelligence Agency as one of the worst and most ridiculed secret services in the West with a "long history of recruiting and promoting Soviet agents." "It was made itself ridiculous because it believes it is above scrutiny," said Labour deputy leader Roy Hattersley. He was speaking during a parliamentary debate on a bill put forward by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government to license bugging and break-ins by the agency. The Security Services Bill will give a basis in law for the first time to the 79-year-old agency, whose existence several governments refused even to acknowledge.

Bush to stop press shouting

WASHINGTON (R) — President-elect Bush laid down the law to the press corps Thursday, saying he will ban reporters' shouted questions during White House photo sessions after he becomes president Jan. 20. "Talking at photo opps (opportunities) will continue until Jan. 20, and after that, there will be absolutely none," Bush told reporters at — where else? — a White House photo opp. After my inauguration, "I'll have other ways of communicating that will be much more pleasant for you and much more pleasant for me and much more respectful of our guests," Bush said. The shouted question at White House photo sessions is of relatively recent vintage, having sprung up during the Reagan administration as presidential news conferences grew farther and farther apart.

Widow kills self, 7 children

COLOMBO (AP) — A widow killed seven of her children and committed suicide in northern Sri Lanka after she was harassed for money by two sons-in-law, the Sun newspaper reported Friday. The newspaper did not give the identity of the woman. It said she fed her children poison and jumped into a well Wednesday in the village of Chedikulam, 22 kilometres southwest of the northern town of Jaffna. The woman had 11 children, including two married daughters, the newspaper said. The husbands of her daughters had been harassing her for money because they felt they had received inadequate dowries, it said.



Demonstrations by Armenians demanding unification of the ethnic Armenian Karabakh region with the Republic of Armenia had been frequent in the

Armenian capital Yerevan until the Dec. 7 earthquake that devastated the region (Sigma photo).

Armenians see little impact of quake on ethnic tensions

By Carol J. Williams
The Associated Press

SPITAK — The earthquake that devastated Armenia seems to have done little to dampen the simmering ethnic conflict between Armenians and neighbouring Azerbaijan.

Spitak, virtually demolished by last Wednesday's quake, was one of the cities of refuge for Armenians who fled homes in Azerbaijan after a dispute between Armenians and Azerbaijanis burst into violent confrontation in February.

Destruction of the refugees' new homes by the earthquake has fuelled the hatred of some Armenians and renewed their year-long campaign for annexation of the Azerbaijani-governed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In the wake of the disaster, rumours circulated here that some Azerbaijanis were celebrating the calamity in Armenia. The accounts, which could not be confirmed, were spreading rapidly nonetheless, and infuriating the earthquake-stricken populous.

A dozen Armenian villagers spoke of the conflict with a reporter as they picked away at piles of concrete and twisted metal — the remains of Spitak. Other Armenians working within earshot put down their tools and raced to add their own denunciations.

"We have received aid from every corner of the world, but not from Azerbaijan," said Varchik Azaryan. "The Georgians have been wonderful. They've done everything possible to help us, but not the Azerbaijanis."

Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan are the three Soviet republics in the Caucasus mountain region.

In the Armenian capital, Yerevan, activists over the weekend staged fresh demonstrations pressing for reunification with Armenian-dominated Nagorno-Karabakh, resulting in five arrests and denunciations from top Kremlin officials.

This is a present from (Soviet President Mikhail) Gorbachev on our day of mourning," said activist Rafael Popayan, reflecting a growing anti-Kremlin sentiment among Armenians waging the campaign for Nagorno-Karabakh.

Major Arzumanyan fled the Azerbaijani port of Sumgait in March after ethnic extremists went on a rampage Feb. 28, killing 26 Armenians.

"I brought my family here after the riots because we couldn't live there anymore," Arzumanyan said as he stood among the ruins of the Spitak apartment he moved into a month ago.

"The Armenians are the friendliest and most peace-loving people in the world, and better relations with the Azerbaijanis is not up to us, it's up to them," he said. "I don't expect much to change because of this tragedy."

Such outbursts have angered Kremlin authorities, who see continued attention on the ethnic dispute as unpatriotic single-mindedness that cannot be tolerated in a time of crisis.

"We have to constantly put out fires these people are starting," Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov said Monday in Yerevan.

The battle for Nagorno-Karabakh is not seen by Armenians as a nationalist action or a divergence from the tenuous unity that holds together the 15 republics and 100 peoples of the Soviet Union. Rather, they view reunification as an imperative for ethnic and social justice.

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"They were forced out of Azerbaijan. They didn't leave of their own free will," he said, gesturing to piles of concrete left by the quake. "Look what has happened to them. We will never get along with the Azerbaijanis."

The Armenian population has complained during the years since dictator Joseph Stalin's death in 1953 that Azerbaijani authorities discriminate

greatly when Afrikanners fled British rule in the then Cape colony.

As Botha spoke, a few kilometres away thousands of extreme right-wing whites staged their own ceremonies, snubbing the officially sanctioned observances.

Present were Andries Treurnicht, head of the far-right Conservative Party which has made big inroads into the ruling National Party's support, and Eugene Terre Blanche, leader of a neo-fascist organisation demanding the creation of a white state.

Botha, noting that non-whites as well as Afrikanners took part in the original 1838 trek, said: "We must strive for national unity and for unity in our different communities."

Sri Lankan violence rages as polls near

COLOMBO (Agencies) — Nineteen people were killed in politically motivated attacks in the Sinhalese heartland as the government began airlifting officials to Tamil areas to supervise next week's presidential contest, military officials said Friday.

Sinhalese extremists who have vowed to stop Moodys election killed nine supporters of two political parties, a soldier and a government agriculture officer in the past 24 hours, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The government has blamed the front for the killings of more than 600 people, mostly Sinhalese, since July 1987 when the government signed a peace accord designed to end guerrilla warfare and terrorist attacks by members of the Tamil minority.

The bodies were found in several towns in southern and central Sri Lanka. All were thought to be Sinhalese, the country's ethnic majority. Of the political workers, three supported President Junius R Jayewardene's United National Party and six supported the opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the officials said.

The front said the accord made too many concessions to the Tamils, who account for 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people. It vowed to kill anyone who supported the accord, claiming the government has sold out the rights of the Sinhalese who comprise 75 per cent of the population.

A leading candidate for the Sri Lankan presidency told voters Friday the election was the last chance for democracy in a country battered by widespread violence.

"Make no mistake. This is your last chance, your very last chance to preserve democracy," former Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike told a rally ahead of the election.

"Do not be put off by threats. Your courage today will bring you a better tomorrow," Bandaranaike, 72, told a rally near Colombo.

Bandaranaike, who made history as the world's first woman prime minister 28 years ago, is the candidate of a five-party opposition coalition. Her main rival is Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa of the ruling United National Party.

Police sources said 40,000 security men were being deployed to guard the 8,000 polling centres and to protect the voters.

Deep splits highlight Afrikaner 'sacred day'

PRETORIA (R) — President P.W. Botha appealed for unity among all South Africa's races Friday, but the dominant Afrikanners led by the Afrikaner National Party's support, and Eugene Terre Blanche, leader of a neo-fascist organisation demanding the creation of a white state.

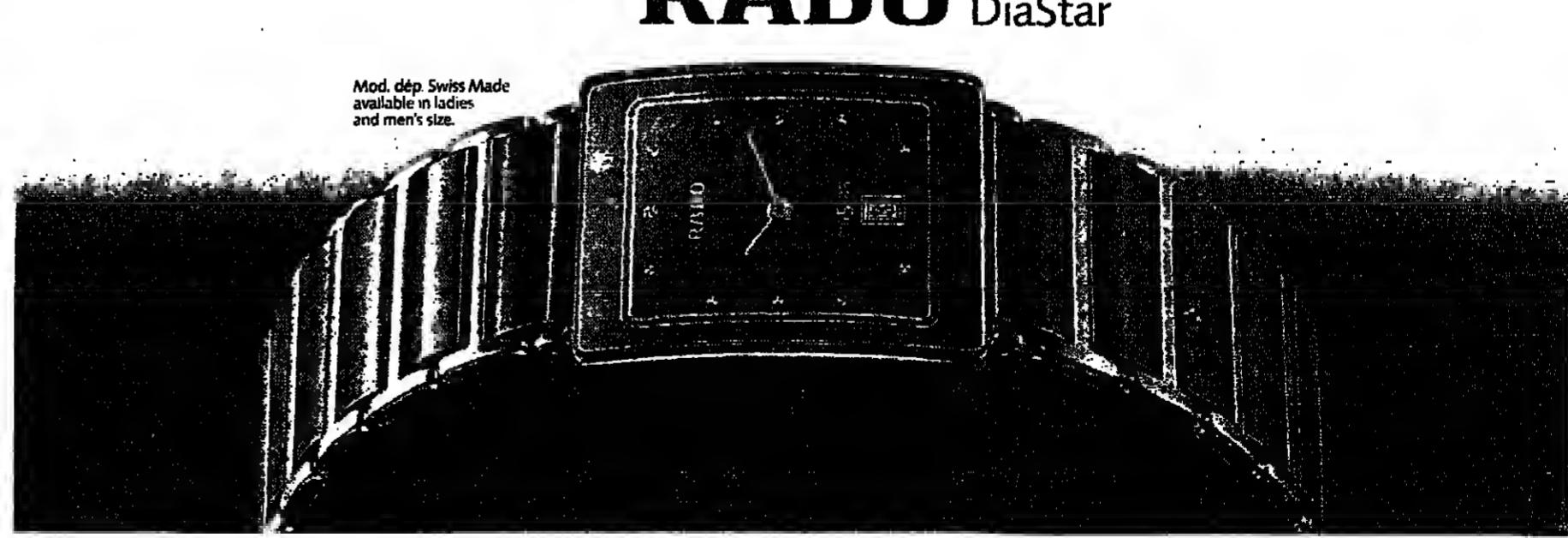
A further sign of the divisions straining South Africa came in the form of three bomb blasts which damaged government buildings but injured no one in towns near Cape Town overnight.

Botha spoke at official celebrations of the Annual Day of the Vow, held at a huge brick monument on a hilltop outside Pretoria that symbolises the nationalism of the three million Dutch-descended Afrikanners.

This year's ceremonies were given added significance as they mark the 150th anniversary of the

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Lebanon's central bank chief warns of further lira decline

BEIRUT (R) — The governor of Lebanon's central bank warned Thursday that the local lira would continue a plunge as long as government spending exceeded revenues.

Edmond Naim told Reuters in an interview at the bank in west Beirut that the government's income was just six per cent of its spending.

Figures published by the official national news agency show a slightly better picture, with spending for 1988 at 167 billion liras (\$334 million) and revenues at 20 billion liras (\$40 million).

The lira started to fall against the dollar in 1984, nine years after the start of civil war in 1975, and has since lost 94 per cent of its value. It was quoted Thursday

at 506 to the dollar.

The collapse has driven many families to the brink of poverty as the minimum wage dwindled from the equivalent of \$750 per month in 1984 to \$30 now.

Naim warned against a division of the central bank, one of the last unified institutions in a country with two rival governments, a toothless parliament and an army divided along sectarian lines.

"I am counting on Lebanon's need for a united central bank and the common knowledge that meddling with the bank would be

a threat to all the Lebanese," said Naim.

Economists said a division of the bank would spark a further crisis of confidence in the lira.

The closure threatens the western sector with fuel and flour shortages.

"The central bank has to deal with both administrations and give funds to each especially in matters relating to basic needs," Naim said.

He said the bank was providing the two governments with funds for salaries of government employees, wheat, fuel, oil and medical insurance.

Naim was strongly criticised this month by the military cabinet or army commander General Michel Aoun who accused him of cutting funds for his 15,000 troops.

The central bank holds over 60 per cent of Lebanon's 9.2 million ounces of gold reserves and \$991 million in foreign cash reserves.

Adjusting to new OPEC quota

Iraq to cut oil exports through Jordan and Turkey

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq will cut its oil exports through Turkey and Jordan by 90,000 barrels a day from Jan. 1. Oil Minister Issam Al Chalabi declared Thursday.

He said the move was in line with Baghdad's acceptance last month of an Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) production quota of 2.64 million barrels a day, the same as Iran's.

The Iraqis, who had rejected an earlier OPEC quota of 1.5

million barrels a day, accepted the higher ceiling at an OPEC ministerial conference in Vienna after a bitter dispute stemming from its demand for quota parity with Iran.

The 2.64 million-barrel quota takes effect Jan. 1. Iraq is currently producing around 2.74 million barrels a day.

While discussing exports, Al Chalabi did not actually say Iraq was cutting its production by 90,000 barrels a day. But that figure is close to the amount that Baghdad will have to shave off its

current production to conform with the new OPEC ceiling.

Al Chalabi made no mention of what Iraq's overall export figure will be next month. Iraq's domestic needs are expected to remain at around 285,000 barrels a day.

Al Chalabi said in a statement that Iraq will cut 65,000 barrels a day from the estimated 100,000 barrels it has been trucking through Jordan's port of Aqaba daily since the war with Iran closed its southern Gulf outlets.

These are being opened up following the Aug. 20 ceasefire in

the eight-year Gulf war.

He said another 25,000 barrels a day would be trimmed from the estimated 1.5 million barrels pumped daily through a pipeline across Turkey to the Mediterranean.

Another pipeline through Saudi Arabia has a capacity of 500,000 barrels a day.

Al Chalabi has said Iraq hopes to restore export capacity through Gulf terminals to around 2.5 million barrels a day during its post-war reconstruction.

Tokyo remains most expensive city

GENEVA (R) — Latin American cities, despite massive inflation, are the cheapest in the world for foreign executives, an independent consultancy group said Thursday.

The most expensive were Tokyo and the Osaka-Kobe conurbation in Japan, which for the fourth year running headed the list of 103 cities in Geneva-based Business International's twice-yearly survey of living costs.

Oslo again topped the list in

Europe, with Helsinki taking over second place from Zurich, which now shared third spot jointly with Geneva, the survey said.

The high inflation in Latin American cities was offset in most instances by regular devaluation of national currencies.

The only exception was Mexico City, where the overvalued peso made it one of the most expensive cities in Latin America and the 56th dearest in the world, accord-

ing to the survey.

The survey took into account the cost of a shopping basket of food items, alcoholic drinks, household supplies, personal care items, tobacco, utilities, clothing, domestic help, recreation, entertainment and transport.

Taking New York as a base of 100, the Business International cost-of-living index for Tokyo was 203 and Osaka-Kobe 201. Tehran was the world's third dearest city at 187, followed by the West African cities of Libreville 162, Brazzaville 155, Douala 143 and Abidjan 138.

Oslo, also rated at 138, preceded Taipei 133, Helsinki 128, Dakar 127, Geneva 123, Zurich 123 and Tel Aviv 123.

Most U.S. cities improved in ranking due to the strength of the dollar at the time of the survey. New York was the most expensive, ahead of Los Angeles 97. Toronto was the dearest Canadian city at 102, closely followed by Montreal 101.

Yugoslavia quadruples budget for 1989

BELGRADE (R) — Yugoslavia has unveiled a huge 1989 federal budget rise, reflecting pressure put on government spending by runaway annual inflation of 228 per cent.

Parliament has approved a draft 1989 federal budget of 20,900 billion dinars (\$4.50 billion), Tanjug news agency has reported.

The budget was nearly four

times the 1988 budget drafted a year ago, which amounted to 5,660 billion dinars (\$1.22 billion at current exchange rates).

It was nearly three times higher than the latest revised 1988 budget, which was increased this month to 7,610 billion dinars (\$1.64 billion).

The draft is revised several times annually to keep pace with Yugoslavia's rapid rate of inflation.

The federal budget, always balanced, is financed by sales and

customs taxes and contributions from the six republics and two autonomous provinces.

The budget covers defence spending, government costs, veterans pensions and aid to the country's poorer regions.

It does not include major welfare and education expenses or infrastructure costs, which are covered by the regional budgets.

Defence spending takes up 15,200 billion dinars (\$3.27 billion) of the 1989 budget — 73 per cent of the total against 67 per cent of last year's draft budget for 1988.

Defence normally takes up about five per cent of the communist country's national income.

Prime Minister Branko Mikulic is under pressure in parliament to cut budget spending as the country prepares major reforms to give its ailing socialist economy a free market base.

Yugoslavia is also saddled with a \$21 billion debt and widespread labour unrest in protest at falling living standards.

Oskar Kovac, a minister without portfolio in Mikulic's government and a key architect of economic policies, resigned a week ago in a dispute with Mikulic over interest rates.

We have overtaken the 1988 budget by nearly five billion dinars (\$156 million)," said a senior central bank economist.

He said a projected budget deficit for 1988 had risen from 36 billion rupees (\$1.25 billion) to 41 billion (\$1.281 billion), according to a November estimate.

The economist, who declined to be identified, said in an interview that government spending over the year had risen in defence, wages, pensions, employment projects and drought relief.

Opposition parties say the government has been increasing salaries and pensions to woo vo-

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

W. Bank ships first direct exports

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The first Palestinian farm produce exported directly from the occupied West Bank to the European Community under a recent EC-Israel accord has sailed from Ashdod for France, the EC mission here said Thursday. Forty tonnes of aubergines, grown in the Jordan Valley and labelled Jericho, were shipped Monday by the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives in the West Bank to the French firm Compagnie Fruitiere of Marseille and Sud-France of Perpignan. Palestinians were previously obliged to export their fruit and veg through Israeli marketing boards, which labelled them as Israeli produce. Israel initially objected to independent Palestinian farm exports on political grounds but relented after the European Parliament blocked ratification of EC-Israel trade accords cutting tariffs on Israeli exports. The first produce from the Gaza Strip to be exported under the same accord — 1,100 tonnes of grapefruit — sailed from Ashdod to Rotterdam Dec. 4.

Algerian agriculture receives support

WASHINGTON (AP) — The World Bank announced Thursday that it will join with Japan in helping finance a \$569 million project to increase food production in Algeria, which was hit by severe rioting in October. Algeria has to import about 70 per cent of its food. One of every four Algerian workers is a farm worker, many of them on government-owned farms. Some of these farms are being dismantled as a result of new policies instituted by President Chadli Benjedid's government after the riots. The Algerian government's Banque De L'Agriculture Et Du Developpement Rural (Agriculture and Rural Development Bank) will increase its lending to farmers and food processors to help them buy irrigation equipment, tractors, trucks and other machinery expected to increase production. It will borrow \$110 million from the World Bank, the biggest international source of aid, and \$110 million from Japan's Export-Import Bank. It will lend \$158 million worth of its own money, with borrowers supplying the remaining \$191 million themselves.

Bank of England to buy back state stock

LONDON (R) — The Bank of England has said it would hold a reverse auction in January to buy back government stock in an unprecedented move by the central bank aimed at cutting the national debt. In a reverse auction, stockholders name their selling price. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has made the reduction of the national debt a priority of economic policy. Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigel Lawson's success in swelling public coffers has meant that instead of borrowing cash by issuing gilt-edged stocks, the Conservative government has been using its surplus to buy back stock and cut its debt. The Bank of England said it has quietly mopped up £2.2 billion (\$4 billion) of stock in the gilts market since April. It said the reverse auction would add permanent reserves to the banking system in January, a time when tax payments traditionally drain funds. The cheapest offers would be accepted by the bank up to a pre-set limit. In the first reverse auction, on Jan. 13, the bank would buy stock with a face value of up to £500 million (\$915 million).

Bonn approves aid, loan to Turkey

ANKARA (R) — West Germany has agreed to provide Turkey with 307 million marks (\$175 million) in development aid, officials and diplomats have said. About half the total represented Bonn's annual aid, earmarked this year for power lines from east Turkey to Ankara, railways and the treatment of cement factory emissions. The rest, a separate, non-recurring agreement, would be channelled through Turkish banks to aid the development of small and medium-size businesses, the diplomats said. Diplomats said none of the aid was formally tied to purchases from West Germany but treasury officials said there was strong pressure to buy German goods. The agreement comprised a 27 million mark (\$15 million) grant and 280 million mark (\$160 million) soft loan to be repaid at two per cent interest over 30 years, after a 10-year grace period. Last year West Germany provided grants of 22 million marks (\$12 million) and soft loans of 130 million marks (\$75 million).

Overspending pressures Sri Lankan economy

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's economy, battered by anti-government violence, is also under pressure from government overspending during the approach to elections, central bank officials have said.

"Until about June the budget was on course. But after the date of the presidential election was announced, it went out of control," the economist said.

The economist said 70 per cent of the excess in the budget deficit would be financed by printing new currency.

Gross domestic product was expected to grow by three per cent in 1988, down from a targeted 5.5 per cent. "The 5.5 per cent was based on the assumption that there would be peace by mid-1988 because of the July, 1987, accord. But the situation has not changed," he said.

"The new government will have a formidable task ahead in tightening the budget, cutting government spending in particular, because the presidential candidates are all promising new projects," he said.

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IBM gives Siemens a venture in Roilm

NEW YORK (R) — International Business Machines (IBM) Corp has said it would spin off its Roilm telephone equipment subsidiary into joint ventures with the West German company Siemens A.G. Industry analysts had expected IBM to take some action on Roilm, which has been a money-loser. Siemens, a leading European supplier of telephone equipment and exchanges, had emerged as the leading candidate to acquire Roilm outright. "IBM and Siemens they need for growth in the 1990s," IBM Chairman John Akers said in a statement announcing the agreement with Siemens.

Icahn raises stake in Texaco

NEW YORK (AP) — Carl Icahn has disclosed he has raised his stake in Texaco Inc. to 15.8 per cent, spurring fresh questions about the takeover strategist's ultimate plans regarding the third-largest U.S. oil company. Icahn said in a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission that he bought 2.6 million shares of Texaco stock between Dec. 7 and 12 for \$131 million, or an average of about \$50.37 a share. His filing did not explain why he bought the stock. But the move vaulted Icahn's stake over the 15 per cent threshold, which under the takeover laws of Delaware, where Texaco is incorporated, means he must raise his ownership to 85 per cent or wait at least three years before attempting any acquisition effort that would result in the company's breakup.

Nigeria to base budget on low oil price

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's 1989 budget will be based on the assumption that world oil prices will range between \$12 and \$14 a barrel during the year. President Ibrahim Babangida was quoted as saying. The Nigerian media said Babangida told reporters after a budget meeting of the armed forces ruling council that a range of \$12 to \$14 was "the most practicable variable" on which to base the budget estimates. Nigeria, burdened with \$27 billion of foreign debt, depends heavily on oil for its foreign exchange earnings. Babangida said efforts would intensify in 1989 to diversify the production base of the economy to avoid excessive dependence on oil.

U.S. trade deficit falls to \$10.35 billion

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. trade deficit fell by about three per cent in October to \$10.35 billion from a revised \$10.67 billion in September, the Commerce Department has said. The decline was the result of a 1.1 per cent fall in exports in October to \$27.67 billion on a seasonally adjusted basis, and a 1.7 per cent fall in imports to \$38.02 billion. The October trade gap was within the range of expectations of most Wall Street economists who had expected the October trade gap to range between \$9.0 billion and \$12 billion. Contributing to the decline in the October trade deficit were lower imports of capital and consumer goods and cars and parts, partly offset by lower exports of industrial supplies and materials and foods, feeds and beverages, the Commerce Department said.

Israeli inflation rate reaches 17.3%

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's consumer price index rose by 1.6 per cent points in November, bringing the inflation rate for the last 12 months to 17.3 per cent, the Central Bureau of Statistics has said. The main factors were a 6.1 per cent jump in clothing prices and a 3.8 per cent increase in health costs, the bureau said. Inflation since the start of the year is running at 15.8 per cent. Consumer prices rose 2.4 per cent in October and 1.6 per cent in November 1988.

Dow Chemical wins environmental award

WASHINGTON (AP) — The World Environment Centre has named the Dow Chemical Company of the United States to receive its fifth annual gold medal for environmental protection activities by multinational enterprises. An international jury cited Dow for "its creative use of technology to reduce, eliminate and treat waste and for its open communications with, and concern for its publics." These can "serve as a model for industry to protect the global environment for future generations," it added. The centre is a New York-based organisation largely sponsored by private industry that promotes worldwide exchange of information and expertise on environmental problems with governments. Dow, headquartered at Midland, Michigan, is a major producer of chemicals, plastics and pharmaceuticals employing 35,000 people in 32 countries. Its worldwide sales reached \$13.4 billion in 1987.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY DECEMBER 17, 1988 7

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Ali admits spate of phone calls

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali suddenly has taken responsibility for a flurry of recent phone calls to politicians and journalists, following reports that an "Ali telephone impostor" had made the calls. "I've been making the calls," Ali told a news conference on the steps of the Capitol Wednesday. The Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution had reported last week that Ali told sports columnist David Kindred he was not responsible for the phone calls, which the newspaper said were aimed at promoting projects for personal gain. At his Washington news conference, Ali acknowledged that he had told the Atlanta newspaper he did not make the phone calls. But he said he made the denial in order to escape questioning by Kindred, who "kept following me around."

Bernardin tries sailing trip again

NEW YORK (AP) — Guy Bernardin embarked Thursday on his second attempt to break the record for the 22,530-kilometre journey by sail from New York to San Francisco around the tip of South America. Bernardin's first try last March ended disastrously when his mast broke and his boat sank off Cape Horn. He had reached the Cape in less than 42 days, a record, and was 10 days ahead of the record pace to San Francisco. The record of 89 days 8 hours to San Francisco was set 134 years ago by the Flying Cloud, a 229-foot (69-metre) Clipper with a crew of about 40. Bernardin, 45, a French-born U.S. citizen who divides his time between Newport, Rhode Island, and France, prefers sailing alone.

Bruno hopes to pin Tyson down

LONDON (AP) — British challenger Frank Bruno flew to the United States Wednesday hoping finally to agree terms with undisputed heavyweight champion Mike Tyson after five postponements in six months of their world title fight. "It doesn't pay to get too excited," Bruno said as he left Heathrow airport. "I won't be doing any body-popping until I finally sign the contract. Hopefully it will be a nice Christmas present — but I won't believe it until everything is concrete." As Bruno left for Los Angeles, reports out of the United States said the fight had been fixed for Feb. 25 at the Las Vegas Hilton. Bruno said he was

realistic enough not to rule out another postponement. "Unfortunately, you never know what Mike Tyson is up to," he said. "The latest stories about him don't exactly make good reading, but all I'm concerned with is getting him in the ring." Bruno was accompanied by Jarvis Astaire, who had the original contract for the fight to take place in London, and manager Terry Lawless.

Karpov, Ehvest, Tukakov and Gavrikov in semis

MAZATLAN, Mexico (AP) — Four Soviet chess champions — Anatoly Karpov, Jean Ehvest, Vladimir Tukakov and Viktor Gavrikov — face each other Thursday in semifinals of the World Speed Chess Championships. In quarter-final playoffs Wednesday, former world champion Anatoly Karpov beat grandmaster Roman Dzintischashvili of the United States, by 2.5-1.5 points. Speed chess is a variation of regular chess in which participants get much less time to think about and make their moves. In regular chess each participant has 2½ hours to make the first 40 moves; in speed chess, only 30 minutes. The result is a brand of chess that the promoters hope might be more geared to television.

Maria Walliser wins World Cup downhill

ALTENMARKT, Austria (AP) — Switzerland's Maria Walliser blitzed her way through a snowfall Thursday to win the second women's downhill ski race of the World Cup season. The downhill and a slalom race Friday will be used to establish results in a combined event, essentially a paper competition. Walliser's time was 1 minute, 35.23 seconds down the 1,900-metre course. Veronika Wallinger of Austria was runnerup in 1:35.33 with Switzerland's defending World Cup champion Michela Figini next in 1:35.55.

S. Arabia wins place in Asia Cup final

DOHA (R) — Saudi Arabia won a place against South Korea in the final of the ninth Asian Cup Soccer Championship when they beat Iran 1-0 Thursday with a first-half goal by their "Pele of the desert."

Majeed Abdullah gave Iranian keeper Ahmad Abedzadeh no chance with a powerful, perfectly placed header in the 13th minute.

The Iranians, who have lifted the cup three times, were outplayed by a fast-moving, hard-tackling Saudi side that fought every ball.

But the Saudis were guilty of several lapses in defence which

they were fortunate the Iranians did not capitalise on.

They may not get off as lightly in the final Sunday against South Korea, whose flowing, attacking game has made them the stars of the tournament.

Abdullah also put the ball in the back of the net from the penalty spot five minutes from the end, but British referee George Courtney ordered him to retake it. Keeper Achedzadeh stopped the second shot with a brilliant save.

The final will be played Sunday.

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1988

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

— As Charted By The Carroll Righter Astrological Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Stay calm, and avoid risky or hasty decisions. Quarrels over trifles may arise, and irritating responses can escalate to full-scale battles. Overcharged sensuality can be directed toward a new relationship.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) For those traveling, getting there will be half the fun. Be tolerant of immature reactions to handle things.

Taurus (Apr. 20 to May 20) Pushing others along may get a negative response. Shopping may move ahead if you are patient. Try to divert moodily family members.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Be a good friend to someone who needs help. Social opportunities may have to be shelved. Relaxing at home will have stimulating rewards.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Love can take a strange, twist. Control the home situation, and ignore foolish actions and hot tempers. Stay in a good mood.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) You feel held back by family and partnership difficulties. A diplomatic approach will clear the air. The evening has most of the usual sparkle.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sep. 22) Variety is the spice of life. Throw the day's plan out and start anew.

LIBRA (Sep. 23 to Oct. 22) Too many chiefs and no Indians can start the day's course. It is difficult

to administer those you love, but you master the situation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Someone from the past misses you very much. A love theme needs to be patiently changed. Holding back will make matters worse.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You appreciate being where you can relax and reorganize your plans. Choose to be with stable people who can add to the quality of your life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Trust your intuition and earthy instincts to handle a disorganized taking. Taking a friend along for the ride will be especially rewarding.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Avoid arguments over finances and budgets. Stay with a realistic approach. You impress another and receive a loving response.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) A change in lifestyle may not go in the direction you planned. Time spent with a companion is a pick-me-up. Check the scale before indulging.

PEANUTS (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) You feel held back by family and partnership difficulties. A diplomatic approach will clear the air. The evening has most of the usual sparkle.

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Report estimates 500,000 U.S. drug-takers

CHICAGO (AP) — As many as 500,000 teen-age boys may be using anabolic steroids to improve their appearance or athletic performance, despite possible dangerous side effects, a researcher said Thursday.

"We're talking about potentially abusive behavior that has to be addressed directly, or we may have individuals who grow up and suffer adverse health consequences," said W.E. Buckley, assistant professor of Health Education at Pennsylvania State University.

In a survey of 3,400 boys in their final year at 46 public and private U.S. high schools in late 1987, 226 boys, or 6.6 per cent of those responding, said they had used steroids, Buckley and associates reported in Friday's journal of the American Medical Association.

Although the research wasn't based on a random sample of the nation's high schools, the study suggested that 250,000 to 500,000 adolescents are using or have used steroids, Buckley said.

"I didn't have any idea it would be this high," Buckley said, calling his study the first of its scope in the United States.

Androgenic anabolic steroids are synthetic derivatives of male hormones, and some athletes take them to help build up their muscles. Doctors have reported in recent years that steroids have been linked to serious side effects such as mood swings, severe acne, baldness, temporary sterility, abnormal liver function, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and possibly cancer of the liver and testicles.

While nearly half the boys who reported using steroids said they did so to improve athletic performance, 26.7 per cent said they had popped them or injected them for the muscular appearance the drugs can help produce.

"It's the new-age, body beautiful, fitness people out there as well who are using anabolic steroids," Buckley said in a telephone interview.

About 10 per cent said they used steroids to treat sports-related injuries and 7.1 per cent cited social reasons, such as peer pressure.

The study also showed that about one in five 12th-year high school students claiming to take steroids said they got the drugs from a doctor, pharmacist or veterinarian, and 38.3 per cent said they first took the drugs at age 15 or younger.

Parents looking for steroid use should watch for unusually fast muscle growth, mood swings, or flare-ups of acne in their children, Buckley said.

Most studies on the long-term effects of steroids have involved people using them legally for other ailments, so further study of the drugs' effects — particularly on healthy, growing adolescents — is needed, Buckley added.

In the short term, steroids reduce sperm production, the researcher said.

Milan looks to beat Juventus

LONDON (R) — Three of the English First Division's outstanding midfield players hope to revive their flagging fortunes by giving impressive performances in the soccer league's top three fixtures Saturday.

Irish international Kevin Sheedy of Everton, Danish international Jan Molby of Liverpool and Arsenal's potential England player Paul Davis have widely differing reasons for wanting results to action.

Sheedy, out of favour following a dispute with Everton manager Colin Harvey, has asked for a transfer and will seek to impress potential buyers against Queen's Park Rangers in London.

The match will be newly-installed player-manager Trevor Francis' first in charge of Rangers since he was confirmed as Jim Smith's successor Wednesday following a week of rumour and speculation.

Sheedy came on as a substitute for injured Scottish international Ian Wilson during Everton's English League Cup defeat at Bradford City Wednesday and is ex-

pected to keep his place.

Molby, by contrast, is unlikely to wish to attract any outside attention if he succeeds in regaining his place in defending champions Liverpool's team for their home match against league leaders Norwich.

Now back to full fitness after six weeks in prison for motoring offences, Molby will be hoping to satisfy no-one more than Liverpool's player-manager Kenny Dalglish as the Reds bid to end a frustrating run of three successive home draws.

In Italy, unbeaten first division leaders Internazionale Milan hope to add Juventus to their impressive list of victims this season when they meet the Turin team at home Sunday in the top match of the least full programme of European domestic league fixtures before the two-month winter break.

Auxerre, the new leaders following a 1-0 win over Nantes on Wednesday when champions Monaco beat previous leaders Paris Saint-Germain 2-0 at the Parc Des Princes, go to Cannes.

Bullets have to jump higher

LANDOVER, Maryland (AP) — It took the Washington Bullets two games and four days longer than the Charlotte Hornets to win five games this season. Expansion isn't easy on a team struggling to rebuild. The comparisons are brutal.

By winning only four of their first 18 games this season, a start which included a seven-game losing streak, the Bullets have been measured, marked and mocked by the Hornets' relative and early success.

But they say they're ignoring it.

"There's no pressure on this team at all," said Bernard King after Washington snapped its seven-game losing streak Tuesday night with a 115-105 victory over the Boston Celtics.

"We come out and, for the most part, we're ready to play every night," said King. "There were some games out on the West Coast that we could have won and, for whatever reason, we didn't."

Eight of the Bullets' 14 losses have been by eight points or less. One came in overtime to the Los Angeles Lakers in Inglewood, California, after Magic Johnson sank a 45-foot shot as regulation time ran out.

"We placed hard in just about every game on the road and had a chance to win maybe three of them," Washington coach Wes Unseld said of the team's just-completed five-game road trip.

"It felt like we were on the road there for about a month," King said.

The Bullets put themselves at a height disadvantage before this season, electing not to try and re-sign Moses Malone and then trading Manute Bol to Golden State for Dave Feitl, who is Washington's only player taller than 6-foot-9.

Every other NBA team has at least three players taller than 6-9.



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MR. JOHN GARUFI

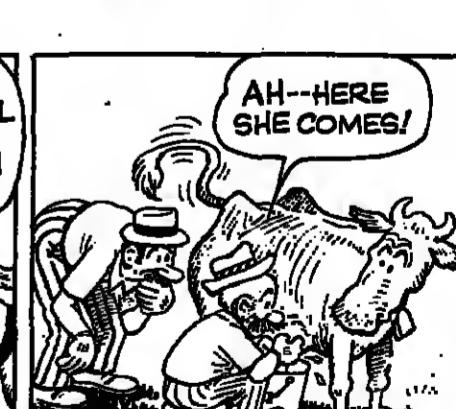
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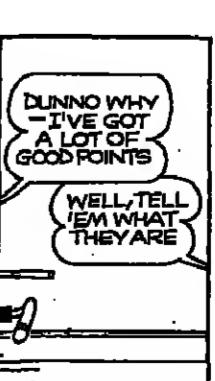
Peanuts



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"Your after-shave lotion is a little TOO macho. Makes you smell like a rhinoceros."

